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26 DECEMBER 1967

DTG : 261009Z

FROM: GENERAL WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV, SAIGON

TO : GENERAL WHEELER, CJCS

INFO: ADMIRAL SHARP, CINCPAC

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.3
DA Memo. Jan. 5, 1988
By DCH NARA, Date 6-13-90
DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLJ 82-60 (#144a)
By DCH NARA, Date 6-13-90

SUBJ: OPERATIONS IN THE TRI-BORDER AREA OF CAMBODIA

REF : A. MACV 40588 DTG 050815Z DEC 67 (TS-L)

B. MACV 40871 DTG 071215Z DEC 67 (TS-L)

C. JCS 11097 DTG 231731Z DEC 67 (TS)

1. YOUR RECENT MESSAGE (REF C) INDICATES THAT NO FURTHER DECISION HAS BEEN MADE ON MY RECOMMENDATION AND NO FURTHER ACTION WILL BE TAKEN AT THIS TIME.

2. I REGRET THE EXISTENCE OF THOSE FACTORS YOU POINT OUT WHICH PREVENT THE ENGAGEMENT OF ENEMY FORCES OPERATING IN THE TRI-BORDER AREA. TO BRING YOU UP TO DATE, FOR SEVERAL WEEKS RUNNING, ROSSON HAS HAD THE AREA SUBJECTED TO AN INTENSE ANALYSIS. THE TEAM DOING THIS ANALYSIS HAS HAD ACCESS TO HIGHLY RELIABLE INTELLIGENCE DATA FROM ALL AVAILABLE SOURCES. ITS FINDINGS CONTINUE TO SHOW THAT WITHIN THE AREA:

A. MAJOR ENEMY COMMAND HEADQUARTERS ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN CONTROLLING OPERATIONS.

B. MAJOR ENEMY COMBAT FORCES ROUTINELY MOVE THROUGH, STAGE, AND TRAIN IN THIS AREA.

C. LOGISTICAL BASES AND SUPPLY POINTS SUSTAIN AND SUPPORT ENEMY UNITS IN CONTACT IN RVN.

D. THE ENEMY IS PRESENT IN LARGE NUMBERS, AND HIS VULNERABILITY IS SUCH THAT HE COULD BE PUNISHED SEVERELY IF PURSUED BY FIRE.

3. THE MANY TARGETS MENTIONED WOULD BE MOST SUITABLE FOR [illegible] NOW, AND THE CONTINUING INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION EFFORT CAN BE EXP[illegible]

TO PRODUCE NEW TARGETS AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THOSE ALREADY LOCATED.

4. I THINK IT WORTH REPEATING THAT THE BORDER IN THIS AREA IS ILL-DEFINED AND TRAVERSES RUGGED JUNGLE-COVERED TERRAIN WHICH STRETCHES GREAT DISTANCES. THE BORDER IS INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE AIR AND THE GROUND. IT IS NOT MARKED BY READILY IDENTIFIABLE TERRAIN FEATURES. NIGHT B52 STRIKES AND ARTILLERY FIRING ONLY AT NIGHT WOULD MINIMIZE THE RISK OF COMPROMISE OF THE OPERATION. MOREOVER, THERE APPEARS TO BE A GOOD PROBABILITY THAT ATTACKS UNDER THESE CONDITIONS CAN BE MADE WITHOUT PUBLICITY.

5. AMB BUNKER IS IN STRONG SUPPORT OF MY POSITION AND INTENDS TO AGAIN MAKE HIS VIEWS KNOWN.

6. I AM RENEWING MY REQUEST THROUGH FRONT CHANNELS.

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